

## Guest Editorial

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### Thank a teacher for making a difference in your life

*A Teacher Appreciation Week guest editorial by State Superintendent Tony Evers*

The first week of May is the traditional observance of Teacher Appreciation Week, and it's one of the easiest topics for me to address. I truly value and appreciate the work of the teachers and other professionals who are in our schools helping our kids learn.

I think there is no higher calling than to be a teacher. Some mistakenly think that if you're smart in a subject, you can teach. While deep content knowledge helps a good teacher be better, teaching is a complex task. Successful teachers like to work with kids. They have an understanding of child development and learning styles as well as classroom management. They know how to develop lessons for today's classrooms that offer multiple ways for students to show their learning. From writing stories, to putting together multi-media projects, to dramatic reenactments — teachers meet kids where they are and move them ahead to reach academic goals.

But, it's not just academics. Our teachers also are there, alongside parents and family members, helping children become better citizens; people who are ready to become the doctors and medical professionals, civic and business leaders, inventors and entrepreneurs, carpenters and welders, and yes, teachers for tomorrow.

You can't sugar coat it. Being a teacher in Wisconsin has been pretty tough these past few years. Take-home pay has been cut. The decades-old system that provided them a voice in their work environment has been torn apart. Too many have retired or left the profession. Teachers have faced lots of change and new demands on their time. And, the political backdrop in Madison has been exceedingly difficult. It's no wonder research indicates that fewer high school graduates want to go into education.

But I am optimistic. The work of an educator is heroic. Educators change lives. The work is also rewarding. There's no better feeling than seeing the spark in a student who's mastered a new concept. Educators teach to all students and close achievement gaps.

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Teachers, I thank you for all the good work that you do and salute you in every way possible. To the parents and citizens of Wisconsin, I urge you to find time during Teacher Appreciation Week, May 4-8, 2015, to thank a teacher who's been influential in your life. Teachers make a difference.

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**COMING SOON:** Visit the Department of Public Instruction YouTube site for a Teacher Appreciation video.  
<http://youtube.com/wisconsindpi>

**PROCLAMATION:** Teacher Appreciation Week Proclamation  
<http://dpi.wi.gov/news/releases/2015/proclamation-teacher-appreciation-week-may-4-8-2015>

**NOTES:** A high resolution photo of the state superintendent is available on the Department of Public Instruction "Media Contacts and Resources" webpage at <http://dpi.wi.gov/news/contacts-resources>. This news release is available electronically at [http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/news-release/dpinr2015\\_44.pdf](http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/news-release/dpinr2015_44.pdf).